

# THE BEACON

## Green Acton to Hold Home Weatherization “Barn Raising”

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Special to the Beacon

Thursday, November 18, 2010

When was the last time you heard about a barn raising in New England? Green Acton wants to bring back this tradition — with a twist. Instead of raising walls and a roof, Green Acton will help one lucky homeowner raise building energy efficiency through a weatherization “blitz.” We’ll provide approximately a dozen volunteers for a three-hour work session under the guidance of skilled team leaders, to reduce drafts, install water-saving devices, and replace those hard-to-reach incandescent light bulbs with efficient ones. The homeowner pays only for the materials (averaging \$200–\$500, depending on the work she or he chooses to have done), and can expect to save up to 10% on utility bills going forward. All that volunteer labor is free!

Here’s a run-down on how the process works. Experienced auditors will evaluate the needs of the house using a “calibrated blower door test.” The blower increases the drafts in the house enough to find where the cold air is sneaking into the house. While the fan is running, an inspector will walk through the home, marking and recording the locations of leaks. After the walk-through, the homeowner will have a baseline air leakage number and volunteers will assemble a list of materials and tasks to be done at the work event, with a goal of reducing leakages by 20%.

A month or so later, when the supplies have been gathered, volunteers will return to the home to complete the tasks, usually in less than four hours. Afterward, we’ll have a little celebration of our 21<sup>st</sup>-century Acton “barn raising.” (A few homemade cookies definitely sweeten the deal!)

The upsides of this fun opportunity: the homeowner saves energy and money; volunteers get to meet fellow Actonians and learn valuable skills they can use on their own homes to save money and reduce their carbon footprints; and we all build community in the process.

If you would like a chance to win this free “barn raising blitz” for your home, please contact Sue Cudmore at [susan.cudmore@gmail.com](mailto:susan.cudmore@gmail.com) by **December 15**. Please include figures for your total annual heat and electricity costs.

And if, ultimately, yours is not the winning home, you can still accomplish some or all of this on your own: call MassSave (1-866-527-7283) to have a free energy audit done. Low-income homeowners can call South Middlesex Opportunity Council, Inc. for free weatherization at 1-800-286-6776.

Green Acton won’t exactly raise you a barn, but we’d love to raise your energy savings and efficiency! For more information on Green Acton please go to [www.GreenActon.org](http://www.GreenActon.org).